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# SONGS UNDER OPEN SKIES

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M. JAY FLANNERY





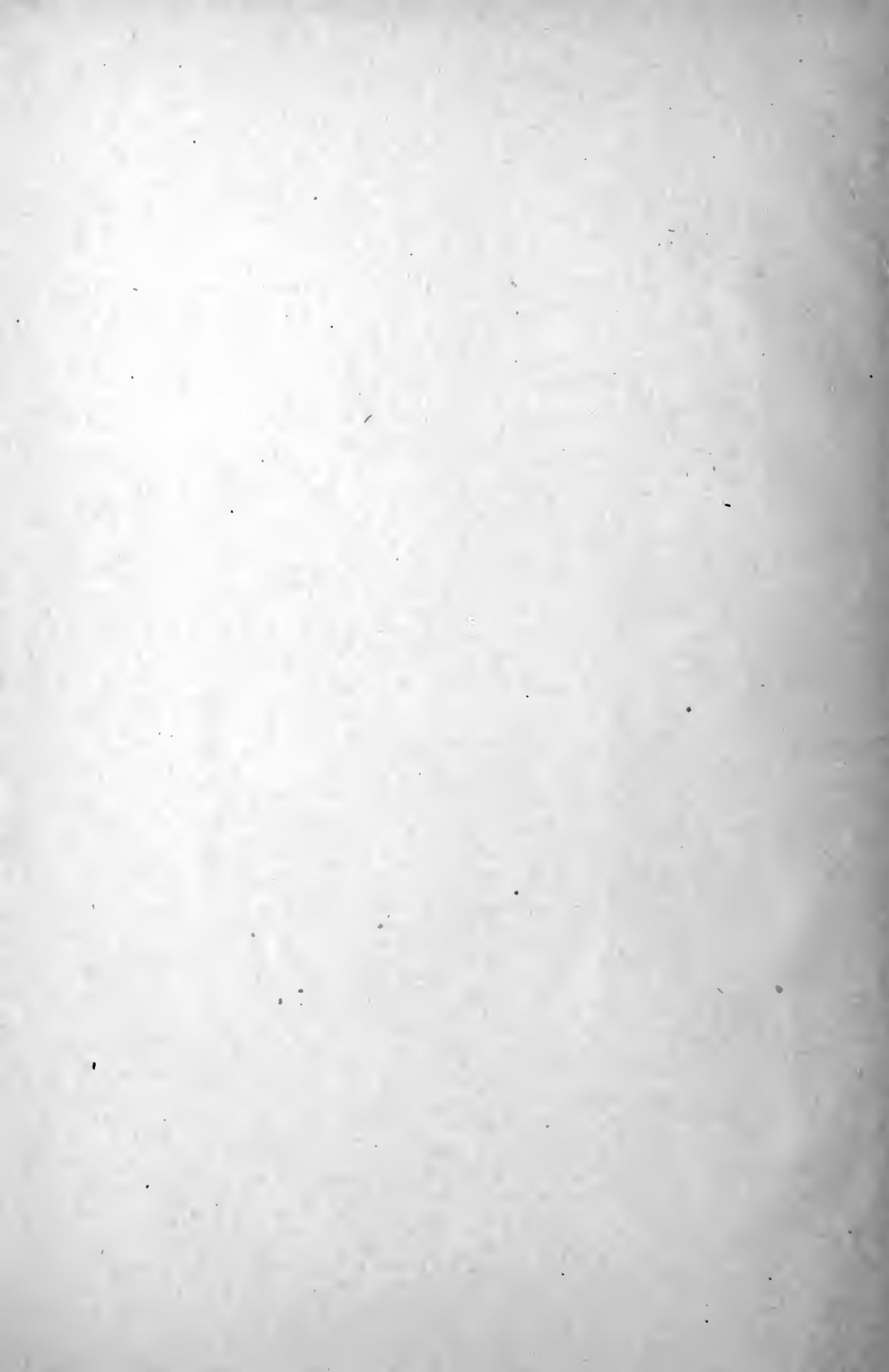
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# SONGS UNDER OPEN SKIES

BY  
M. JAY FLANNERY



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No 1

TO MY WIFE

Thanks are due *The Twentieth Century Magazine* and  
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duce certain poems in this volume.

## CONTENTS



Before the Storm,	-	-	-	-	-	-	9
Mack's Pond,	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
The Robin Calls,	-	-	-	-	-	-	11
Did You Ever Go Afishin'?	-	-	-	-	-	-	12
Camping on Mad River,	-	-	-	-	-	-	15
The Cardinal Bird,	-	-	-	-	-	-	17
My Old Home,	-	-	-	-	-	-	18
When Wash and I Went Fishing,	-	-	-	-	-	-	20
Ephraim's Boys,	-	-	-	-	-	-	22
Huffersville,	-	-	-	-	-	-	24
Let 's Go Home,	-	-	-	-	-	-	26
Phyllis,	-	-	-	-	-	-	29
For I Love You,	-	-	-	-	-	-	31
I Know a Dear Little Maiden,	-	-	-	-	-	-	32
A Passion Serene,	-	-	-	-	-	-	33
Moods,	-	-	-	-	-	-	35
Be It So,	-	-	-	-	-	-	37
Pessim and Optim,	-	-	-	-	-	-	39
As I Came Home at Eventide,	-	-	-	-	-	-	40
The Egoist,	-	-	-	-	-	-	41
You Call Him Infidel,	-	-	-	-	-	-	42
Love, Sacred and Profane,	-	-	-	-	-	-	43
When I am Gone,	-	-	-	-	-	-	44
As Love Met Hate,	-	-	-	-	-	-	45
Ad Amicum,	-	-	-	-	-	-	46
William Henry Venable,	-	-	-	-	-	-	47

Addison Peale Russell,	-	-	-	-	-	48
Edwin Bruce Cox,	-	-	-	-	-	49
To One Who Saw Matthew Arnold,	-	-	-	-	-	50
Ad Magistrum,	-	-	-	-	-	51
Hamilton,	-	-	-	-	-	52
However Long I Ling'ring Wait,	-	-	-	-	-	53
In Memoriam,	-	-	-	-	-	54
Jeff Hildebrant,	-	-	-	-	-	55
To a Poet Born in April,	-	-	-	-	-	57
The New Year,	-	-	-	-	-	59
The Schoolma'am,	-	-	-	-	-	60
The Schoolmaster,	-	-	-	-	-	61
The Aviators,	-	-	-	-	-	62
Abraham Lincoln,	-	-	-	-	-	64
Paola and Francesca,	-	-	-	-	-	65
How Can We Face the World?	-	-	-	-	-	66
I Stood Beside the Open Grave,	-	-	-	-	-	68
Love's Enough,	-	-	-	-	-	69
Young John Thomas,	-	-	-	-	-	71
The City of God,	-	-	-	-	-	72
An Ode,	-	-	-	-	-	78
To Miss C——,	-	-	-	-	-	88
Schoolgirls Chattering,	-	-	-	-	-	89
Autographs,	-	-	-	-	-	90

# SONGS UNDER OPEN SKIES



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## BEFORE THE STORM

THE leaves in the wind are aquiver,  
The rose on her stem is anod,  
A mauve light up-gleams from the river,  
A dank smell exudes from the sod.

Across the once blue of the heaven  
The storm-cloud unrolls a deep gloom  
That is cut by the flash of the levin  
As white as a lily abloom.

In the east is the silence of waiting,  
In the west is the roar of the storm;  
While the watchers their senses are sating  
With its beauty of color and form.

---

## MACK'S POND

I STOOD to-day beneath the trees  
Upon the margin of the pond,  
Whose waters crinkled in the breeze  
And lapped the sloping bank beyond.  
The sunlight patterned all the wave  
Where tossing leaves the openings gave.

A strange, mysterious quiet reigned—  
A silence vocal with the hum  
Of insects, that the ear enchained,  
And shot athwart by cries that come  
From every sort of beast and bird  
The day-god into life had stirred.

The boy with team amid the corn  
Lent to that choir his tenor note;  
And booming on the air of morn  
The noise of rushing train would float.  
The black bass feeding in the pool  
Splashed in his play the waters cool.

And yet for all that coil of sound  
I seemed from living things remote;  
It made the stillness more profound  
That on the ear of listener smote.  
That hush of Nature tranced the heart  
And made it of that life a part.

---

## THE ROBIN CALLS

THE robin calls from yonder tree  
An unmelodious note,  
Calling in vision back to me  
A spring now far remote,  
When Youth and Love o'erflowed my soul  
To every inlet, deep and shoal.

He calls reiterant his mate,  
As long ago called I  
From out a lyric heart elate  
In song to earth and sky,  
A love all other loves beyond  
In frenzied hearts of lovers fond.

He calls and calls, but calls not back  
To this poor heart of me  
The spring of springs that on the rack  
Stretched soul and sense for thee.  
For chill December's icy breath  
Of false heart brought my love to death.

---

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## DID YOU EVER GO AFISHIN'?

DID you ever go afishin' in "the merry month o' May,"  
When the cornplantin' 's over, an' you had an idle  
day?

When the trees were all ashinin' in their glossy coats  
o' green,

And the birds among the branches, like a choir behind  
a screen,

Sang their songs o' love an' gladness in their sweet an'  
cheery way?

Did you ever go afishin' on such a glorious day?

I can shut my eyes an' see it, just as plain as plain  
can be,

Up at Spangler's, on Mad River, in the spring o'  
'seventy-three.

I can smell the grass agrowin', I can feel the velvet  
sod

Underneath my feet aspringin', as I grasped my  
fishin' rod

An', with Dan'l Folck aleadin', took my way down to  
the brook,

To try my luck afishin' with a pole an' line an' hook.

Me an' Dan went down the roadway to'ards where  
Woolleys ust to live,—

What a pleasure just anamin' of those ol' friends seems  
to give!—

---

Then we turned off through the pastur' an' across  
the railroad tracks,  
With our hearts abeatin' warmer than the sun upon  
our backs,  
Till we reached the side o' Spring Run an' on its moist  
bank set;  
For the grass within the shadow still with the dew  
was wet.

Oh, the words with power fail me to tell you how I  
felt,  
To describe this pearl o' streamlets, and how its  
waters smelt  
Of the fresh spring shower o' raindrops that fell the  
night before,  
An' cleared the sky o' cloudbanks, an' spread a fresh-  
ness o'er  
The whole surroundin' landscape, an' filled this witch-  
in' stream  
With swishin', whisperin' murmurs, like the voices  
in a dream.

An' there upon that brookside we set us down to fish,  
A world o' joy within us, there was nothin' else to  
wish.  
For the goggle-eyes an' catfish bit at our simple bait,  
An' when the bites were lackin' 't was contentment  
just to wait  
An' watch the curlin' eddies go adancin' out o' sight.  
In youthtime just alivin' is a source o' pure delight.

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But when the fish quit bitin' in that partic'lar place,  
We wandered down the streamside, an' as noon drawed  
on apace,  
We turned our footsteps to'ard that spot now held in  
Mem'ry's bond,  
An' et our relished dinner by the side o' ol' Mack's  
Pond.  
(They did n't call it Shartle's in those old an' better  
days,  
'Fore the city folks had sp'ilt it with their mincin'  
city ways.)

Then, as that fine spring afternoon draw'd swiftly  
to its close,  
Too swiftly for those tense young hearts that knew  
no other woes  
Than that their days were all too short, we turned  
our faces home;  
With tired limbs but hearts content we turned back  
from our roam.—  
Say, you have missed full half your life, yes, more  
than that, I lay,  
If you never went afishin' in "the merry month o'  
May."

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CAMPING ON MAD RIVER. (A FRAGMENT.)

*(To Z. T. H. and G. H. S.)*

THOSE days and my pale-visaged, spectral self,  
Across the vistaed years which, wayward, elf  
In tangles all the skein of mundane things,  
Float like dim wisps of driven cloud on wings  
Into the blue of unremembering Time.  
Then, ere the curtain fall on our poor mime,  
This to the memory of those precious days  
We passed in concourse, conning Nature's ways  
And drinking deep from friendship's brimming  
glass.

And unto you, my thrice-dear friends, who pass  
In vivid presences through every hall  
And chamber of my heart; whose voices call  
In thrilling accents;—unto you I give  
My tribute for a friendship that will live  
Beyond the bourne of time. If He who rules  
In His wise providence this world, has schools  
In other spheres, I ask no greater joy  
Than with such noble friends my soul to employ.

The morn long-looked-for dawned without a cloud  
To mar expectant hope, or crush the crowd  
Of eager longings born in hearts still young.  
Fair Nature with her silver-trumpet tongue,

---

---

Speaking through every breeze, blew crystal calls  
For all her lovers pent in cramping walls,  
To break their bonds, loaf, and invite their souls  
To share her gustful feast among the boles  
Of oak or elm or silvered sycamore,  
Beside some pleasant stream whose waters pour  
Content into the heart of him who yields  
Himself a trustful worshiper of fields  
And forests, hills outlined against the blue  
Of distant skies, and all the motley crew  
That people these domains.

---

---

## THE CARDINAL BIRD

A FLASH of fervent flame from out the green  
Of yonder tree, and from the midst a voice  
So silver-sweet it seems no sound terrene,  
But some choir-note of angels that rejoice.

---

---

## MY OLD HOME

IN a broad and fruitful valley  
Framed by gently curving hills  
Lies a fair and pleasant village  
Whose dear name my memory thrills.

Fertile fields are all about it,  
Giving it that precious name:  
Fair-of-field—than it no other  
Can with joy my heart so flame.

Here, in days now gone forever,  
Lived I, free from carking care;  
Here I spent those days of gladness  
To which Youth is always heir.

In this village passed my school-days,  
When emotion's fervent glow  
Spread a glory over trifles  
Such as Age can never know.

Down her streets my feet have trodden,  
And my heart with hope was full,  
As Ambition's powerful tension  
At my heart-strings seemed to pull.

Here, too, came my early manhood,  
Years that brought a calmer mood;  
Life's harsh duties pressed upon me,  
Left no time to dream or brood.

---

---

Here were formed those ties of friendship  
Time can never break apart;  
Here was formed that sacred union  
That now binds my hand and heart.

Is it strange that as I wander  
And read deep in Life's old tome,  
My fond heart should love thee ever,  
Fairfield, dearest, my Old Home?

---

---

## WHEN WASH AND I WENT FISHING

THE sun shone bright and glorious that dewy summer  
morn,

The meadow larks were piping loud and gay;  
Dear Bob White whistled bravely 'mong the checkered  
rows of corn,

And the air was sweetly fragrant of the hay;  
The yellow sunlight shimmered in gold upon the  
trees,

The light clouds flecked the heaven's blue beyond;  
There was beauty in the landscape and music in the  
breeze,

When Wash and I went fishing at The Pond.

All Nature seemed alive with joy that beauteous day  
in June,

And our hearts to every impulse made response;  
To the music of the earth and sky they beat in perfect  
tune,

And life seemed worth the living for the once.  
The fresh young blood surged in those hearts to  
lighten them from care,

And Hope her roseate colors quickly donned.  
Oh, Life and Hope went hand in hand adown the  
valley there,

When Wash and I went fishing at The Pond.

---

---

The years have glided swiftly since that lovely summer day,

And Time has put his mark on form and face;  
The crow-feet mar our features, and our hair is turning gray,

And we miss our youthful strength to run the race.  
But our hearts have not forgotten 'midst the strife  
of all those years

The strong and joyous lesson we then conned.  
We have faced the shafts of Fortune with a courage  
void of fears,

Since that day we went afishing at The Pond.

---

## EPHRAIM'S BOYS

FAIR Bellbrook lies along the hillside,  
Reposeful on her triumphs won  
In former days of stern endeavor,  
In days that are forever gone.  
The Present rests in dreamful quiet,  
Content to call the Past her own.

Not always thus has been her story.  
The slum'brous silence she enjoys,  
The old heroic days of Bellbrook,  
The days that knew Old Ephraim's Boys,  
Would from her shake with zeal relentless,  
As blight that her fair strength destroys.

In courage strong, in high devotion,  
With youth and strength and spirit blest,  
Those boys, in shop, at forge or bench-side,  
Though rife with fun, with quip and jest,  
Yet wrought with manful purpose alway;  
And life and deeds their truth attest.

Their labor filled with hum the workshop,  
Their laughter filled the street with noise;  
In fun and frolic, work or pleasure,  
In all that thoughts of youth employs,  
Those men were boys in every feature,  
Those fine young men, Old Ephraim's Boys.

---

Now, thirty years have passed so swiftly,  
And Ephraim in the graveyard lies;  
Those boys are changed to aging gray-beards,  
And work and care have dimmed their eyes.  
But hearts of courage still support them,  
The spring of Youth, that Age defies.

Are present days, then, less heroic?  
Is Bellbrook now less full of Men?  
Forgive an old man his illusions,  
Whose blood throbs not as it did then.  
The Present has its own achievements,  
But this lies not within his ken.

---

---

## HUFFERSVILLE

THE Valley Pike comes leading down  
And forms the sole street of that town,  
Whose name is yet without renown.  
But eyes with tears unconscious fill  
For Huffersville.

My memory cons each object o'er:  
The apple tree beside the door,  
And Anton Glasser's grocery store;  
The willow and the old grist mill,  
In Huffersville.

The logyard lies beside the road,  
But drives not now the sharp oxgoad,  
The patient ox drags not his load.  
The mill is gone, the saw now still  
In Huffersville.

The forebay flings its waters bright  
That sparkle in the shimmering light;  
The covered bridge bursts on my sight;  
And old Bath church upon the hill  
Near Huffersville.

Mad River pours his limpid stream,  
Where I can see as in a dream  
The backs of naked urchins gleam,  
As they disport at their sweet will  
In Huffersville.

---

The schoolhouse up the Dogtown way,  
Where boys and girls in dreamland play  
As they did in that distant day,  
When boy-love did my pulses thrill  
    In Huffersville,

Still holds its corner of my heart.  
But in those dreams, a world apart,  
My Mother's face to life will start.  
No distance then my love can chill  
    For Huffersville.

And now, these bright September days,  
I see those visions through the haze  
Of glory Time, the Artist, lays.  
Across the years they call me still  
    From Huffersville.

---

---

## LET 'S GO HOME

(Dedicated to the Greene County, Ohio, Home Coming.)

O BOYS and girls of dear old Greene, where 'er you  
wander now,  
Whether "your locks are like the raven" or "the  
frost is on your pow;"  
No matter where your dwelling is, beside the Golden  
Gate,  
Or in the nearer distance of the fine old *show-me*  
State;  
If on the banks of Hudson, or in Oklahoma new,  
Or 'mong the pines of Georgia,—a voice calls loud  
for you.  
On every breeze 't is borne along beneath the sunlit  
dome;  
'T is the voice of our old Mother. She's calling.  
Let's go home!

Where 'er may be our hearthstones, our heartstrings  
vibrate still  
To the call of our dear home-land, of every vale and hill.  
Though far from her we've wandered, we drag the  
lengthened chains,  
Though other interests call us, our love for *home*  
remains.  
Amidst the bickerings of the mart, the folly and the  
strife,  
This vicious rough-and-tumble we mortals vain call  
Life,

---

Our yearning hearts turn to that voice, wherever we  
may roam;  
'Tis the voice of our old Mother. She's calling.  
Let's go home!

From the rocky walls at Clifton, from the Glen at  
Yellow Springs,  
From Cedarville and Old Town, that welcome message  
rings.  
And then from dear old Jamestown, where they used  
to hold The Fair,  
(That best of bards, Alf. Paxson, is the Poet Laureate  
there;)  
From Xenia, and Spring Valley down there by Bar-  
rett's Mills;  
From Bellbrook, too, that classic town, among her  
seven hills.  
(Oh, the coasting hill at Bellbrook with its merry  
midnight noise  
Still grips the heart with tender pain of one of Eph-  
raim's Boys.)

From Osborn and from Bowersville, from Paintersville  
and Goes,  
From Alpha and from Bobtown, the wind that message  
blows.  
And from that finest valley, where Mad River turns  
the mill,  
Where Fairfield shows her well-loved form to the  
summit of Read's Hill;

---

---

From the depths of Rocky Hollow that our feet have  
trod of yore,  
And the little town of Byron, where Mitch. Ennis  
kept The Store—  
To all her absent children, wherever they may roam;  
'Tis the voice of our old Mother. She's calling.  
Let's go home.

---

## PHYLLIS

I LOVE her unobtrusive ways,  
The restful rustle of her dress,  
The homely grace her form displays,  
Her quiet cheerfulness.

Here flames no passion's fire intense  
To burn to ashes friendship's flower;  
But hearthside warmth of love to fence  
Two hearts from winter's power.

The artist in this rustic face  
May find of beauty little store,  
And sculptor hand may fail to trace  
Soft lines for marble frore.

Her lips may miss Dan Cupid's curve,  
Her nose tilt upward in surprise,  
Her cheeks no metaphor deserve,—  
But oh! but oh! her eyes!

Their light is tender as the morn  
At its new birth, when, sweet and shy,  
A breeze runs whispering through the corn,  
And pearl tints flush the sky.

---

---

They speak to me of artless love,  
Of heartfelt, precious, homelike things,  
That lift my humble soul above  
The sordid pomp of kings.

And so I love her soothing ways,  
The clean-sweet odor of her clothes,  
The tranquil charm that round her plays,  
Her mien of rare repose.

---

## FOR I LOVE YOU

I HAVE a secret I 'm yearning to tell,  
Forth from my bosom it threatens to well.  
It will o'erpower me. Oh, what shall I do!  
It 's, I love you, love you.

With its tense passion I 've struggled in vain,  
Fearing its telling could only bring pain.  
Nothing its power can bind or subdue,  
For I love you, love you.

Turn not your ear from my pleading away;  
List to the story my heart has to say.  
This is its message, and with it I woo:  
Oh, I love you, love you!

Earth has no other my soul can desire;  
Heaven holds no promise my cold faith to fire;  
None else I find half so lovely or true,  
Since I love you, love you.

If there 's no hope in the light of your eye,  
Nothing is left me but only to die.  
Come to my forehead then death's chill and dew,  
For I love you, love you.

---

---

## I KNOW A DEAR LITTLE MAIDEN

I KNOW a dear little maiden,  
Sweeter than clover is she,  
When its bloom in the meadow is laden  
With spoil for the home of the bee.

Fairer her face than the morning,  
When Dawn takes the east with surprise:  
The love-light, her features adorning,  
Beams out from the depths of her eyes.

Happy her heart as the springtide,  
When blossoms burst out on the spray;  
Pure are her thoughts at their wingtide  
As skies on a bright, cloudless day.

Life, take this dear little maiden  
Close to your bosom of love;  
See that her sweet heart is laden  
With blessings that come from Above.

---

## A PASSION SERENE

WHAT can they know who are children, forsooth,  
Of the meaning of love?  
They who are stricken with mad-frantic dreams  
By the gods above?  
Theirs is no love, this hot passion and pain  
That racks their breasts  
With a torture and bliss as of heaven and hell.  
The blind god jests  
With such as these in their folly and teen.

But we, ah we!  
We who have sailed through the fast fleeting years  
O'er the tempestuous sea;  
We who have sorrowed and suffered and wept  
O'er the ills of life,  
Together as lovers and helpers and friends,  
As husband and wife;  
Out of the ashes of burnt-out desire  
Have seen arise,  
Holier, purer, and chaste as the snow  
Under moonlit skies,  
Free from the bitings of jealous despair,  
A passion serene.  
In this new kingdom of peace that is perfect  
Thou art the queen.

---

Deep in our hearts is the spirit of Love;

O'er us it hovers.

We who have passed through the flames of the  
furnace,

We are true lovers.

---

## MOODS

### *Sometimes I Muse*

SOMETIMES I muse what fate awaits  
My soul behind that unpierced wall.  
Shall I but sleep within those gates?  
Or answer glad some higher call?

Shall dreamless Nothing there enfold  
My being, dead to love or hate?  
Or shall I rise from out this mold  
A spirit free, with joy elate?

What matter which to me may come?  
Whate'er may hap will still be best.  
Whether I strive beyond the tomb,  
Or sink to an eternal rest.

### *It Must Be So*

It must be so that we shall meet  
Some morrow in that Other Land;  
There to renew communion sweet,  
And walk with loving hand in hand.

When that will be, oh we shall know,  
In that clear light which fills our hearts,  
No shadow, such as here below  
To truest love some gloom imparts.

---

For from the source of Love Divine  
We two shall draw such perfect bliss,  
That heart to heart we shall incline  
In trust more pure than known in This.

---

## BE IT SO

SUPPOSE that after this keen-sentient gust  
Of transitory breath there dawns no trust  
Of gladsome morrow, yet why should I fear  
To face the inevitably True, and steer  
My course by present stars? Of what avail  
That I should cheat my ear with mystic tale  
Told by some Dreamer-Seer of long ago,  
In the dim dawn, when overcharged with woe  
Was every prophet's message? If there be  
Beyond the boundaries of the world we see  
Some better life, why I shall enter in  
Without surprise, and, fitful, strive to win  
Acceptance there as here—and fail, no doubt,  
To please my own poor self. (For I count out  
Of my world-*schema* any conscious gods  
Whose purpose stands with my best self at odds.)

But, if Oblivion's waters, fresh and cool,  
Shall bathe my soul in its deep, stagnant pool  
And drown all fair remembrance, be it so!  
Without a craven fear my feet shall go,  
And void of all regret. For I have wept  
And smiled, loved and been loved, and sweetly  
slept  
After the long day's toil; and felt good hate  
Darkle my face. What else in store has Fate?

---

---

Yea, summer sunsets, autumn's golden glow,  
The warm, dank breath of spring, the maze of  
snow,  
The spacious vault of night belit with stars,  
The ocean's throb, and all the primal wars  
Of Nature's elements,—all these were mine  
To feel and know. Why should I fret or whine?

Thank the All-giver for the life that is,  
And, if a purpose more benign be His,  
Thank Him for that. But thank Him like a Man,  
Who looks into the face of God to scan  
His own best nature with undaunted eye;  
And knows it life, mayhap the best, to die.

---

## PESSIM AND OPTIM

### *Pessim*

HOW strange this coil of life to which I cling  
With such a feverish yearning, as a thing  
Of utmost worth, despite the toil and pain,  
Sorrow and troubled joy, and love as vain!  
I did not seek of any gods that be  
A task like this, to tempt a shoreless sea  
In craft so frail, without or helm or chart,  
A lowering sky o'erhead, within a heart  
That looks and longs for some small rift to ope,  
And potent voice (vain wish!) to counsel, Hope.

### *Optim*

I did not ask for this great gift of life,  
But some High Power has armed me for the strife  
With swelling heart to meet with dauntless front  
Whatever fates or gods may send. I blunt  
The edge of my desire to fight with weak  
Complaints! No, no! On every side I seek  
For worlds to conquer. Every nerve of me  
Quivers with joy to try this trackless sea.  
I did not will to come, but I rejoice,  
And in this call to battle hear God's voice.

---

---

## AS I CAME HOME AT EVENTIDE

AS I came home at eventide  
Involved in purple rime,  
I watched the squadroned stars alight  
To read their sense sublime.

They seemed a drift-revealing choir  
That sang to spirit ears  
Of Man, of God,—of Mysteries  
Filling the fleeting years.

It was as if their voices still  
Across the unpathed span  
Must blab the secret of the world,  
A meaning hint for Man.

But though I came at eventide,  
And though inspired by rime,  
The stars in silence swept the sky,  
Nor told their sense sublime.

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## THE EGOIST

I ASK no help of any power  
In heaven above or hell below;  
'Gainst all the baleful hosts that lower  
My own unaided strength I throw.

Why should I impotently cry,  
Or waste my breath in craven prayer?  
At worst I can but fighting die,  
And spill my spirit to the air.

Give me to feel my pulses rouse  
With all the joy of mortal strife;  
Let bliss-of-battle knit my brows;  
For this is breathing, this is *life!*

I *am*, and all the winds that blow  
Cannot remove me from that base.  
With pride I challenge every foe,  
And fling my glove in every face!

---

## YOU CALL HIM INFIDEL

YOU call him infidel who fails to see  
Within the wrappage thick which you have  
placed  
Around the soul of Him of Galilee  
The truth, so lucent in simplicity,  
But hid by that in which it lies encased.  
Yet which of you before His face shall stand  
The more unfaithful: he who dares to say  
He sees no truth? or you whose dogmas lay  
The block of stumbling in your brother's way,  
In your blind zeal to follow Christ's command?

---

## LOVE, SACRED AND PROFANE

FLAME-WHITE with a consuming love of Him  
Who walked Judea's hills now centuries dim,  
I sought my Lord within the garden's gloom  
And found—an empty tomb!

In wavering weakness and with many a lapse  
I sought my brother,—more from need, perhaps;  
But, as commercing the low ways we trod,  
I found that I loved—God!

---

## WHEN I AM GONE

WHEN I am gone, and ye around my bier  
Shall softly shed a sweet, unbitting tear,  
Shaping your speech in kindly thought of me,  
Who have no ear to hear, no eye to see,  
May not my life too poorly mean appear.

When I have done with every mortal fear  
And paid the debt I owe to Nature here,  
No boast of deeds of valor done can be,—  
When I am gone.

Nor need ye tell how unto those most dear  
My vagrant heart at call of Love would veer.  
But may some child who played about my knee,  
Or stricken soul, say only this, that he  
Made life more happy through the livelong year,—  
When I am gone.

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## AS LOVE MET HATE

AS Love met Hate in the crowded way,  
Said Hate with a scowl that darkened the day,  
“What a beastly mob, and what nasty weather!  
A curse on the world and its people together!”  
Said Love with surprise in her light-shot eyes,  
“Why, I never beheld such beautiful skies;  
Grasses and flowers the bright fields cover;  
Each man in the way, and each maid, is a lover.  
What a glorious world, and how sweet is mankind!  
I travel no further my heaven to find.”

---

AD AMICUM

**I**N my own strength I cannot stand,  
Without your heart I am not whole;  
Like soft dews in a rainless land  
Is your love to my thirsting soul.

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WILLIAM HENRY VENABLE

WE greet Ohio's foremost son of Song  
In thee, who sang Miami's willowy stream  
In virent Junes, and dreamed the Teacher's  
Dream  
With virile faith that makes the struggler strong.  
Undying loves from us to thee belong  
For Melodies that move the heart, and seem  
The tongues of lambent flames that glint and  
gleam  
From out old Pasts, dead and forgotten long.

God! may that Flight too early called The Last  
Extend beyond the Psalmist's measure far.  
On that pure heart let no foul load be cast  
Too hard to bear, and let no livid scar  
Of grief be made; in Song his days be passed,  
Till Thou receive him late in Dante's Star.

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ADDISON PEALE RUSSELL

HIS brain conceived "A Sky-Built Human World,"  
For which his fecund, germ-creative thought  
Provided large-endowed beings, caught  
From some fair Arcady, or orb out-twirled  
Fresh from the Maker's hand, of star-mist whorled.  
In wise penned apologue this master taught  
A wealth-mad Age how myriad less than naught  
Its ferment; life how fine, with love empearled.

O Teacher mystic! we thy lesson read  
With hearts aglow to catch its word of gold;  
In fertile spirits hide the quickened seed.  
And, grateful for the talents manifold  
Of head and heart that nurture our poor need,  
We greet thee, Master, Friend! Dear Lord, with-  
hold!

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EDWIN BRUCE COX

WHY should we wait till death has closed his eyes  
To speak the worth of one for whom our heart  
Now holds reserved a sacred place, apart  
From all the common life that 'round us lies?  
Why should we not speak out the words that rise  
Up to our lips? O friend of mine! no art  
Can tell a tithe of precious thoughts that start  
In my soul's core, what happy tears surprise.

Thy life to mine has brought a world of joy,  
Such as will come only when friend to friend  
Brings perfect love to each, without alloy.  
The friendly years from out their storehouse lend  
Sweet memories, that no distance can destroy,  
Till life and love this side the grave shall end.

---

## TO ONE WHO SAW MATTHEW ARNOLD

SO you indeed saw Matthew Arnold! Met  
That kindling spirit, speaking face to face,  
Who knit to manful strength so much of grace  
As England ne'er since Shakespeare did beget!  
You, your enraptured mortal eyes have set  
On him who worshiped Beauty, while a base  
Philistine mob held all the market place;  
Who suffered slight for Truth without regret.

How much of bliss and blessing may be poured  
Into one moment, worth a life to know!  
The even pulses beat a humdrum lay,  
When on a sudden that we long adored  
In vision enters through our doorway low:  
From thenceforth angels walk with us the way.

---

## AD MAGISTRUM

*(To the Memory of Joseph W. Hebble.)*

THERE is no death for him whose life survives  
In others, after mortal change has wrought  
A veil before the senses, and has caught  
From mortal sight the spirit, from its gyves  
Now free. That great, strong soul that touched  
our lives  
In youth's bright day, when every touch is fraught  
With fateful issue, bides in us, and naught  
Of him is lost while virtue in us strives.

O Master, in a thousand-thousand various ways  
Thy virile life goes on in those whom thou  
Didst erst inspire to scorn themselves to give  
In fee to low, base things, and pass their days  
Enwrapped in self; and dost inspire e'en now  
To find in service their true goal, and live.

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## HAMILTON

A BUSY city strides the rolling flood  
The Great Miami proudly pours to meet  
The River Beautiful. She is the seat  
Of bounteous Trade, whose wakeful fires bestud  
The sky of night with countless flowers that bud  
To burst in roseate bloom, and kindly greet  
The watcher from afar. Her pulses beat  
With Industry's quick throbs of heart-red blood.

The World's her market, and her honored name  
The winds of Commerce bear to every land,  
Where cloth of gold gives promise to be won.  
But not on Trade securely rests her fame.  
For Beauty, Justice, Truth, her people stand:  
Mother of Men is fair Old Hamilton.

---

## HOWEVER LONG I LING'RING WAIT

(E. B. C.)

HOWEVER long beside the sea  
Of Life I ling'ring watch and wait,  
His well-loved form is lost to me  
This side the inward-swinging Gate.  
Though sore oppressed my heart may be,  
Strain as I may the bonds of Fate  
And mourn her cruel, harsh decree,  
I may not find him, soon or late.  
Through tears I see his empty chair;  
I miss his presence everywhere.

And yet, what have I endless lost?  
Is he not with me all the day?  
'Tis but the case aside is tossed,  
His spirit walks with me alway.  
When any taint of withering frost  
My higher purpose threats to slay,  
By his pure sun my soul is crossed  
And warmed to honor by its ray.  
O Soul! thou 'rt armed for any strife,  
Since thou hast known that sainted life.

---

## IN MEMORIAM

(J. J. B.)

WE may not know why on that world-worn heart  
Was laid a burden all too hard to bear;  
We cannot pierce behind the veil, nor part  
The gloomy curtains of that dull despair.

But oh, how heavy must have pressed a load  
Could weight a spirit of such sparkling cheer  
To the dark depths of heedless death, and goad  
The weary soul to shed this mortal gear!

We cannot know. But from the Other Shore  
A best-loved voice insistent called him home;  
And precious hands plucked at his heart-strings  
more  
Than all the world beneath this leaden dome.

For these he left the light of our poor day  
To try the Mystery of that Upper Room;  
With grief-crushed heart before Thy feet he lay,  
O Thou, who dropped a tear at Lazarus' tomb.

Comrade of ours, why read we knightly tale  
Of Honor's quest in musty legend mad?  
Thy life is fragrant of the Holy Grail:  
Thou art our sun-white pure Sir Galahad.

---

## JEFF HILDEBRANT

HE tasted deep the cup of life  
Down to the lees, its griefs and joys;  
He knew the thrill of manful strife,  
Nor stooped to sensual ease that cloy.

He loved with strength all outdoor things:  
The sunset on the western hills,  
The bird that from its covert sings,  
The wayside flower that fragrance spills.

His heart was open wide to calls  
For love from suffering fellow-man;  
His feelings knew no party walls  
Of sect or creed, of kin or clan.

Wherever there was human need  
His gracious presence fill the place  
With sympathetic word and deed,  
With friendship's handclasp, face to face.

With honest, fearless, questioning eyes  
He faced the problem of the world,  
And dared to speak the doubt which lies  
In many a coward breast enfurled.

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Amidst the scenes he dearly loved  
We lay with tears this precious clay,  
And joy to feel his life approved,  
As far as erring mortals may.

O Love Supreme! into Thy hands  
We give with trust this noble soul,  
Assured that Thou wilt piece the strands  
And make the broken pattern whole.

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## TO A POET BORN IN APRIL

(*W. H. V.*)

OLD Mother Nature took her child  
Born under April's unstaidd skies,  
With showery sunlight in his eyes,—  
An April day of breezes mild  
In every feature,—  
And set him on maternal knee  
And taught his baby eyes to look  
In her old cryptic-written book,  
To find the haunt in bush or tree  
Of each wee creature.

She filled his brain with loving lore  
Of beast, of birds that lightly wing  
The buoyant air, of brooks that sing  
A dreamy murmur o'er and o'er  
In secret places.  
She made the catbird sing for him,  
A choir full-throated. All his days  
She showed him her mysterious ways,  
Her serious purpose, lightest whim,  
Her protean faces.

She touched his heart with sorrow sore,  
And yet with manhood's rapture pure,  
And joys-in-sorrow that endure  
The tooth of Time. But more and more,  
In Life's strange fashion,

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She sang to him her mystic lay  
Of death-in-life and life-in-death,  
The riddle of this mortal breath.  
But sang it in an April way,  
With changeful passion.

And then, supremest gift of all,  
The gift of Song, upon his lips,  
Into his heart, she loving slips,  
And bids him into being call  
A world of magic.  
And so our April Poet sings,  
With smiles and tears, of flowers and fields,  
Of man's foredoom and what it yields  
Of Purpose. These with song he wings,  
Chords blithe and tragic.

---

## THE NEW YEAR

WHAT will it mean for me?  
Shall I at length attain  
The heights by all my dreams foretold?  
Be now in truth and deed  
All that I long and strive to be?

Or will my portion be  
The same old round of petty cares?  
Will it be mine once more  
To see my high resolves decline  
To deeds ignoble and ideals mean?  
To sell my soul for each day's dole of bread?  
What will it mean for me?

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## THE SCHOOLMA'AM

NOT born of passion and of pain  
Are they, the children of her brain  
And heart and soul and inmost core  
Of life. No carnal rite has o'er  
Her life and theirs a sweet spell cast.  
No birthpang suffered she; nor passed  
Near to the gates of Death to bring  
These babes to life; nor felt them cling  
With moist lips to her breast; nor long  
Nursed them in pain, and with a song  
Lulled them to rest. No ties like these  
Bind flesh to flesh her life, and ease  
The work her hands and heart must do  
To bring their lives the Good and True.

And yet, her woman's heart goes out  
To them in love as pure, devout,  
And tender, as one human heart  
Can to another love impart.  
Affections from the source divine  
Of perfect Motherhood refine  
Her nurture. No mere dam is she  
That loves unwisely. But to be,  
Through weary travail of the soul,  
The mother pure of beings whole,  
Is hers. Than this no greater crown  
To mortals can the gods bring down.

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## THE SCHOOLMASTER

HE spends a soul of high emprise  
In task so lowly in the eyes  
Of men of purse that pittance mean  
Seems guerdon worthy all the teen  
A heart of loving service tries.

Himself, he office, fame denies;  
Shuts from his ears the lureful cries  
Of riches. Lo, for other's wean  
He spends a soul!

But make no haste to sympathize  
With him. His is no choice unwise.  
In faith the bounds of life between  
Pure Wisdom's golden grain to glean,  
And point a Race to fairer skies,  
He spends a soul!

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## THE AVIATORS

*(To W. and O. W.)*

L O, ye have added as with wizard's wand  
A new domain to man's imperial power,  
And made him monarch of a realm beyond  
The wildest dreams that to his heart respond  
In its most tense and high-exalted hour.

A miracle of miracles it seemed  
When he, whose feet were fettered to the earth,  
On conquest of the heaving ocean dreamed;  
And in his eyes the light of triumph gleamed  
As that bold thought in certitude had birth.

Yet closed to him as by the hand of Fate  
One element forever must remain!  
No human force can ope that brazen gate  
That shuts him powerless from his own estate,  
Which still he strives with ceaseless might to  
gain!

But Fate itself is witless to prevent  
Man's upward progress led by Giant Mind.  
For when Prometheus leal and man consent,  
The gloomy gods no shackles can invent  
The limbs of this great demiurge to bind.

---

For ye have mounted as on eagles' wings  
Into the air, the kingdom of the birds.  
Joy inexpressive his proud bosom stings,  
And in his heart he songs of triumph sings:  
His claims to lordship are not empty words.

---

## ABRAHAM LINCOLN

WHEN Israel's prophet in the days of old  
The Suffering Servant of Jehovah saw,  
No comeliness of features he beheld  
In Him who bore the burdens of the Law.

No grace of form, no beauty to desire,  
Was found in Him who for our ransom paid;  
Yet by His death He raised us from the mire;  
Our sins upon that suffering heart were laid.

And when at length in process of the years,  
A nation proud trode on her brother man,  
God heard the cries, the droppings of the tears,  
And sent a savior to remove the ban.

That homely face, that gaunt and haggard frame,  
No beauty offered to the thoughtless mind;  
But that great spirit in God's wisdom came  
To break the chains that bound his humble kind.

On that great heart a nation's crimes were laid  
That down through all the centuries had come.  
His gentle spirit for our freedom paid;  
Rests on his head the crown of martyrdom.

O brave, meek spirit! thou for us who died,  
That every man through thy death might be free,  
We dedicate ourselves to Duty's side;  
In honoring her thus best to honor thee.

---

## PAOLA AND FRANCESCA

(*Dante's Inferno, Canto V.*)

WHAT matter though the bitter blast of hell  
Enwraps our souls, and all the hideous band  
That in this Pit for their foul deeds must dwell

Howl in our ears? Within this coil we stand—  
We two—alone, and no fierce breath of flame  
Can touch to wither us. Upon this strand

Where upward-lifting Hope for us who came  
Through yielding soft to wicked-sweet Desire  
Lives not, we two, whose hearts remain the same

As on that blissful-bitter day, when fire  
Flowed through our veins as in a book we read  
Of Lancelot and Arthur's Queen, and dire

Confusion seized our senses, that time sped  
All unawares, the book now flung aside—  
We two, divided never, crimson-wed,

Wander at peace and let the whole world slide.  
For what to us is all this wail and woe  
As long as Love shall with us twain abide  
And on our hearts his precious gifts bestow?

---

## HOW CAN WE FACE THE WORLD?

HOW can we face the world with lifted head,  
Or front our neighbor with untroubled eyes,  
When every fiber of our being cries  
That Virtue's blasted and that Honor's dead?

How can we teach nobility to Youth  
Or point with faith to Fame's eternal way,  
When elders by their action dare to say  
There is no worth in goodness or in truth?

When those who should from vileness guard their  
sons  
Lift Vice on high into an honored place,  
And flaunt Iniquity before the face  
Of trustful Youth, and smirch these little ones?

For there is branded on the heart and brain  
Of budding Manhood, seared into its soul,  
That Devil's lie, of hellish spirit whole,  
That sin brings not dishonor in its train;

That trust in temperance and the pure in life  
Is but a mockery; that hope is vain  
That builds on these; that nothing but the pain  
Of foul defeat is guerdon of that strife.

---

Then why not close our churches and our schools?  
Why should we teach, or preach of things most  
high,  
When works like these but give our words the lie?  
When this one fact but shows us we are fools?

In sackcloth and in ashes let us go,  
Since our fair name receives this deep disgrace;  
With hearts bowed down and stricken we must  
face  
The shameful blot all After-time must know.

---

## I STOOD BESIDE THE OPEN GRAVE

I STOOD beside the open grave  
Of one that in his life I hated,  
And thought to have no feeling save  
The one of passion fully sated.

Soft sunshine flooded all the place,  
The birds in every tree were singing;  
While perfect peace possessed the face  
Of him for whom Death's bell was ringing.

Against my cheek caressed the breath  
Of breezes charged with scent of flowers,  
That spoke of life despite of death,  
And filled the heart with Love's pure showers.

A serious silence held the throng  
There gathered round those restful features,  
What time the choir in solemn song  
Chanted God's love for wayward creatures.

How small and mean beneath such skies,  
With that still form at rest forever,  
Appeared this hate before the eyes  
From which no time this scene can sever!

A flood of tears gave sweet release  
To feelings pent, and as from heaven  
A voice seemed low to echo, Peace!  
And Life with love my heart to leaven.

---

## LOVE 'S ENOUGH

THE years, my Love, have brought  
Nor gold nor silver store,  
And things of earth we sought  
Are ashes at the core.

Life promised then <sup>so</sup> <sup>much</sup> <sup>so</sup> <sup>much</sup>!  
We should be rich and great,  
And we with joy should touch  
High honors in the state.

And, too, we should be wise  
In knowledge won from books,  
And gained with ears and eyes  
From fields and running brooks.

All wisdom should be ours,  
And so should power and place.  
Ambition! how it towers  
And—falls upon its face!

For much we sought we missed,  
And things of keen pursuit,  
When won, did but consist  
Of bitter Dead Sea fruit.

---

But though we 've missed the heights  
That in our dreams we saw,  
We 've found what more delights  
As near life's close we draw.

We 've found that more than gold,  
Than knowledge, place, or power,  
Is Love, as we grow old,  
Against the storms that lower.

We 've learned, though hard 's the way,  
Though life's high sea be rough,  
Though skies be cold and gray,  
This truth, that Love 's enough.

---

## YOUNG JOHN THOMAS

DO you see that jolly fellow  
With the snowdrift in his hair,  
But whose heart is rife with summer,  
With no hint of frost-bite there?

Do you hear his mirthful cackle  
As he slyly cracks his jokes,  
When old fun-provoking Humor  
At his short-ribs gayly pokes?

Do you know that heart of gladness  
Spreading sunshine everywhere,  
Driving every old blue devil  
Out of dark souls crushed with care?

That 's my friend, that 's *young* John  
Thomas,—  
Young and strong and tried and true.  
Catch him, hold him, draw him to you.  
He will be a friend to you.

---

## THE CITY OF GOD

*(Read at a banquet of the Hamilton, Ohio, Federated Clubs,  
5th March, 1912.)*

HOW sore dejected is the anxious heart  
Of him whose eyes are purged, whose art  
It is to clearly see beneath the show  
Of outward splendor, all the mean and low  
Conditions, all the hollow mock within—  
The pauper wealth, the beggary and sin—  
A proud, fair-seeming city thinly hides,  
That Joy is laughless, Greed alone abides!

Walk open-eyed with me this crowded street  
Intent to catch its meaning, and to greet  
The Virgin, Truth, so stark and unadorned,  
Praised in her absence, in her presence scorned.  
See how there flaunts before the lustful eye  
Of gaudy, pinchbeck Wealth a rainbow sky  
Of brilliant colors flashed in myriad tones  
From costly silken weaves, from gold, from stones  
Some Afric native gave his life to find.  
Behold this shop, in show beyond the mind  
Of Lydian Croesus, where from shelf to shelf  
Is ranged the reeking wares that power and pelf  
Have wrung from tithe-paid labor o'er the world.  
All this to clothe, in its mad frenzy whirled,  
A putrid body for a soul long dead,  
A carrion dog i' the sun. A sky of lead

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Arches the avenue where scornful Pride  
And thoughtless Youth in whirring monsters  
ride

In endless vain pursuit of that which comes  
Alone, unbidden, to the heart that hums  
A simple song of mingled minor chords  
And joyous notes, too full of life for words,  
In rhythmic beating to its daily toil  
Sweetened by perfect recompense.

The foil

Of this material-mad life is near  
At hand, where factories skyward rear  
Forbidding hulks, and from their chimneys pour  
A foul-besmutching vapor, spreading o'er  
The narrow strips of heaven that dimly show  
Above these canyon streets dark clouds that  
throw

A pall-like shadow on the lives below.  
Within, the image of the Lord Most High,  
That for which the immortal Son did die,  
Bends o'er a hopeless task. For unto him  
There bursts no vision, since his eyes are dim  
With tears of toil for labor without end,  
(Except the end called Death), for thus to spend  
A life was meant to breathe the breath of fields,  
To garner all the bliss dame Nature yields  
In upland meadows, catch the scent of flowers,  
Drink beauty from the West in evening hours.  
And all this moil by him whose heart is dead,  
For a mere crust of sweat-soaked, blood-stained  
bread!

---

View we the home which all this travail brings  
To him whose deft hands build the courts of kings.  
Sure he must rest his weary head o' nights  
On downy pillow. Lord of Heaven, what sights  
Are these! A narrow, stench-filled, blear-eyed street  
Crowded with festering barracks, only meet  
For swine; fulfilled of poverty and woe  
And pale disease and all the blights that go  
Into the piteous lot of God's own poor,  
'Gainst whose advancement Mammon shuts the door:  
The street his children's playground and their school  
Of crime; that web to catch the unwitting fool  
Whose only god is sense, because his soul  
Is crushed, the vile saloon with deadening bowl;  
Our scarlet sister, she whose feet take hold  
Upon the ways to hell as brazen-bold  
She plys her trade, and she the cruelest cost  
Of this mad world of Business, wholly lost,  
Because our Shylock greed demands its pound  
Of human flesh, and leaves no margin round  
A mere subsistence, so that Mother might  
Surround her Daughter with the holy sight  
Of Virtue gathering fair reward:—just this,  
To fail the peace of life, its joy to miss,  
Is recompense of him whose humble worth  
Must bear the crushing burden of old Earth.

The welter of the winter storm is past;  
The arctic-icy hand is loosed at last  
That held in iron grip forest and field  
And murmuring brook, and cast a vitreous shield

---

O'er pond and river, touching with cold palm  
The very founts of life. A breath of balm  
Is borne from out the southern sky, and Love  
Mated with Life bears offspring from Above.  
Jack-in-the-Pulpit reads his homily  
Where late the white-capped, billowy, wintry sea  
Of drifted snow, gazed on by gorgon face,  
Filled heath and holt. Now all the breathing space  
Is palpitating with the bounding blood  
That flows in every swelling stalk and bud  
Of lowly herb and towering tree. The lawn  
Is gilt with burnished gold, for as the dawn  
Drinks up the dew, rathe Dandelion spreads  
His yellow cups, soon changed to hoary heads.  
The homely dooryard shrub shall burst and blow  
With fragrant lilac; life's high tide shall flow  
Through orchards white and pink with beauteous  
bloom;  
Mid blossoming clover eager bees shall boom;  
Pert robins on the sward eye half-askance  
The passer-by; the oriole's nest shall dance  
Upon the breeze; and summer's plenilune  
Shall light for lovers' sakes the nights of June.

Into our veins the ichor rich has run,  
As flows through woodland boles 'neath vernal  
sun  
The precious liquor. In our hearts the God  
Of life eternal, He who works in every sod  
And beats in every embryo, is born  
Again. From our unseeing eyes are shorn

---

The darkening curtains, and we now may see  
A brave new world, the world that is to be;  
Conceived in all this tumult, born in pain,  
But born to joy and to a priceless gain.  
What seemed sheer death to our poor, purblind  
eyes

Was but the pause of life 'neath brumal skies  
Before a glorious spring. We shall behold  
Ere yet this spleenless, blundering world grows old,  
The city built foursquare, whose streets are paved  
With precious gold, whose tree-fringed banks are  
laved

By living waters. Here nor rich nor poor,  
The cash-coarse Dives nor the witless boor,  
Intrudes. But Man, full-blooded with the strife  
For others' gain, for darling weans and wife  
And for his neighbor—he who lives next door,  
In the next street, and, what is strange, yea more,  
He at the wide world's end—shall willing lose  
All *mine* and *thine* in his glad wish to choose  
Another's weal before his own. And she,  
Foretime his servant, helpmate true shall be,  
Bearing not like but equal burden. Then,  
In that glad season of the Future, when  
The curse of hunger, early toil, and care  
Before its time, shall lift, and all is fair  
That looks into the face of budding Youth;  
When Joy and Hope and earnest-minded Truth  
Walk hand-in-hand with little children, rapt  
Toward lofty stars on mountain heights snow-  
capped

---

In visions of new Eden—in that hour  
The heart of Youth shall bloom a perfect flower,  
Filling with fragrance all the happy earth.  
Foul Passion shall to chastest Love give birth,  
And she we mourned shall walk the streets no more,  
Fouling her body, with her spirit sore.

O City Beautiful! of thee we sing,  
For thee we pray and labor. Only bring  
In our own time a sure-prophetic ray  
Of that great sun-burst of the wished-for day,  
When thy old men shall dream resplendent  
dreams,  
Stirred in their slumbers by the Future's beams;  
Thy young men visions see. We kiss thy rod,  
O Lord. Grant us this City of our God.

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## AN ODE

*(Read at the Clinton County, Ohio, Centennial and Home Coming,  
27th August, 1910.)*

### I

TO-DAY upon a hundred-terraced hill  
We stand and gaze, mid plenty and in peace.  
Long since the painted Indian's warwhoop shrill  
Died out in silence, and its echoes cease  
To vex the winds that blow  
Across these fields, where grow  
The abundant harvests for another race,  
Whose homes are happy in the land's increase,  
And whose proud sons a noble lineage trace.

### II

Let us who live surrounded now with all  
The arts that make life worth the living,  
Fail not the noble deeds of those to call  
Back to remembrance, who in giving  
Their simple selves whole-heartedly to duty  
Wrought out this scene in all its power and beauty.  
Those pioneers, into whose labors we  
Have entered, and whose patient durance paid  
The price which Nature sets, that man may see  
His hopes of ease on firm foundation laid,  
Claim of us here who celebrate this day,  
The tribute of a word it honors us to pay.

---

### III

Lift up the voice in song  
To those to whom belong  
All honor, praise, and admiration,  
For that they built this glorious nation  
Through their self-sacrificing lives.  
They felled the forest, cleared the field,  
And made the stubborn sod to yield  
The crop it offers only him who strives.  
They made them virtuous homes, and bred  
A race of strong-souled sons and daughters,  
Brought up in fear of God, and fed  
On homely fare and sweet, health-giving waters.  
Their lives were hard, but not devoid of those  
Life-building joys that give the soul uplift.  
In Sacred Word and song they could oppose  
To all the earthly moil and bitter woes  
Their trust in Him who is His own best gift.  
And in this living faith they wrought,  
And from The Book in vision clear they caught  
A Pisgah-sight of this glad time.  
They knew they did not work in vain,  
They realized that all this toil and pain,  
Which we but poorly tell in rime,  
Would build for Liberty and Peace a fane.  
And lo! in answer to their faith's pure trust,  
Behold these fields with teeming plenty filled;  
These homes where dwells strong, sterling Manhood  
just,  
With every note of jarring discord stilled;

---

These heavenward-pointing spires, these throngéd  
schools,  
Which show that Righteousness with Knowledge  
rules;  
And all the nameless goods that gird us round  
And make our eager hearts with pleasure bound.

#### IV

The age-old struggle tense  
Brute Nature to subdue  
And Titan forces close to mew,  
Which, unconfined, oppress  
In man both soul and sense,  
Leaving no time in which he may possess  
His higher self, and chew  
The cud of leisure sweet,  
At length its violence abates.  
A fairer time awaits,  
And other visions greet,  
The eyes of watchers at the gates.  
But the Sphinx has questions still  
Which still for answer call;  
The gods grind at the mill,  
They grind both large and small;  
And now as in the days of eld  
A hand writes on the wall  
Its warning to the sons of men:  
It is the same which Babylon beheld.  
The wavering balance, now as then,

---

---

Inclines, and Justice bows her head  
In shame. For men are led  
To auction block, and human flesh is sold  
As is the beast's, and gold  
Is weighed against the love  
Of father, mother, child,  
And that fierce passion, hot and wild,  
A spark Promethean from Zeus above,  
That rages in the heart of youth  
And lives in joy and ruth.

V

Against this foul denial of man's right  
To own himself, Old Clinton cried aloud.  
The Quaker set his Inner Light  
Opposed to every compromise,  
Or court-made law of Southron proud.  
And every church of every kind,  
And men who all the creeds misprize,  
With shoulder touching shoulder stood  
Resisting firm Oppression blind.  
The freedom for themselves thought good  
They to another would not grudge  
E'en though his skin were of another hue.  
In spite of threats they would not budge  
From that Old Law, to unto others do  
As they would that another should to them.  
The bondman touched the hem  
Of Freedom's garment, when,  
Escaped through brake and fen,

---

He touched this soil. His path  
From that dark land of wrath  
Was pointed out by willing hands,  
That helped him on the way  
To those clean northern lands,  
Where shone the sun of Freedom's full-blown  
day.

## VI

But not alone  
In straits that call for bitter strife  
Is full-fraught manhood shown.  
The quality of thew and bone  
That makes for pulsing, tingling life,  
In uneventful years  
When rise no clamant fears,  
Puts verve into the world of common toil.  
They gathered then the spoil  
Of Ceres, built them better homes,  
Brought Art and Culture to their hearths,  
And stocked their fields and garths  
With fruits found proper to these loams;  
Then wrought broad highways through the land  
For commerce and for neighborhood;  
And stretched aloft on every hand  
Those copper nerves through which there  
thrills  
Intelligence of ill and good.  
Each morn the conscious ether fills

---

With hum of labor in the fields  
And in the shops and marts.  
And all this hive-like effort yields  
The source from which calm Leisure starts:—  
A leisure turned to best account  
In things of spirit and of mind,  
In things that cause the soul to mount  
Aspiring after life supreme.  
This latter can he find,  
Not in the baleful dream  
Of pleasure sensual and blind,  
But in the precious stores  
Of knowledge vast, when Wisdom opes her doors.  
For this these frequent schools,  
The wise man's proper tools  
To shape and fashion youth  
Unto the mould of perfect truth.  
For this the College on the hill  
To form the intellect and will  
Of leaders of their people, who  
Shall know the right, and knowing, dare to do.

## VII

And now upon the southern breeze  
In shuddering beats there comes  
The hail-like patter of the drums  
That buzz and burr like angry bees.  
And next the sound of Sumter's guns  
In throbbing diapason runs  
Through all the land.  
Now brother's hand

---

Is lifted 'gainst his brother's breast.  
The hour has struck when each must choose  
On which side he shall stand.  
If it were best  
In slothful peace to lose  
All that the Fathers won,  
A land, the best the sun  
In all his course looks on,  
Where freemen formed a mighty state  
To Liberty and Progress dedicate;  
Or, trusting in a righteous cause,  
Invoke the God of Battles, sure  
A goodly land of equal laws  
Is worthy such a bitter cure.  
There is no fond delay;  
For Washington to Adams calls  
At dawn of that dark, fateful day;  
And Richland, Vernon, Wilson, Wayne,—  
O mother-hearts that throb with pain  
In all these cottages and halls—  
With Clark and Green and Marion,  
With Chester and with Jefferson,  
March side by side in rivalry  
With Union and with Liberty.  
From each of these in serried ranks  
Leal Clinton sends her Best—her BEST!  
Her dead make holy ground the banks  
Of Tennessee in Shiloh's woods,  
The Wilderness's solitudes;  
Of Chickamauga in the west,

---

And in the east those dreadful heights  
Of Gettysburg, where proud Rebellion's ghost  
Paled unto death before that host  
That fought for simple human rights.  
On every field the Stripes and Stars  
Contested with the Stars and Bars  
Her gallant sons laid down their lives  
To strike from off a race the gyves  
Of bondage, and to keep  
The Nation one from Sea to Sea,  
From Lake to Gulf, that it might be  
Their children's children aye should reap  
The fruits of peace and unity.

### VIII

At last the gates of Janus close,  
And they who late as deadly foes  
Had met in mortal strife,  
Take up the burden of the civil life  
And by their conduct prove  
That the same motives move  
The patriot on the battle field  
And in the common walks of peace.  
His fight for Justice does not cease  
Till all her foes are made to yield.  
The burden he takes up anew  
To build a nation strong, and true  
To her ideals pure of eld,  
In which she ever held

---

That simple manhood is the test,  
Not wealth or birth,  
Just honest worth,  
Of all that noblest is and best.  
The pride and power of wealth  
Which threaten soon to crush  
The liberty for which he fought,  
And by chicane and stealth  
In trade's mad roar and rush  
To steal the good so dearly bought,  
Can only frustrate be  
By men both brave and free,  
Such as were they who e'en at life's dear cost  
The gage of battle in the dread lists tost.

## IX

But let no note of gloom  
In this glad symphony have room;  
Let be no counsel of despair.  
The world is fresh and fair,  
And full of promise are the coming years.  
The future holds in store,  
Not craven doubts and fears,  
But Hope, as ne'er was Hope before.  
We stand to-day upon the mountain-top,  
As Israel's Prophet did of old;  
No bound of sense our sight can stop.  
Our prescient eyes behold

---

The vision of the World-to-Be;  
When man shall work secure  
From fear, that dogs the poor;  
When none shall bow the knee  
To Mammon, but shall serve alone  
The King of kings, before whose throne  
They only serve whose hands are clean,  
Whose hearts are pure.  
They of the years of which we ween  
Shall not endure  
That little children in their hands shall bring,  
Not fragrant flowers of spring,  
But hard-earned copper for their daily bread;  
That maidens fair and sweet  
Shall fall to ruin in the street,  
That they were better dead;  
That men and women shall grow old  
Before their time that one may gather gold  
In heaps to feed his greedy lust.  
But they, these patriots brave and just,  
Shall usher in  
Isaiah's promised day,  
When Love alone shall win  
The prize of life,  
And social strife  
Shall cast its sword away.  
And as she pours this strain in listening ears  
Old Clinton shall complete her second hundred  
years.

---

TO MISS C——

*(On Her Approaching Marriage, with a Present of a Long Spoon.)*

HYMEN sweet in silver shoon,  
Under soft-blue skies of June  
With its bright mid-summer moon,  
Sing for you his cryptic rune;  
Fill your heart, both late and soon,  
With Love's satisfying boon,  
Making life one long, long *spoon!*

---

## SCHOOLGIRLS CHATTERING

*(To Alma, Mary, Agatha, and Verona.)*

HOW like the foam that lightly floats  
Upon the brooklet's rippled stream,  
Or light as is the dance of motes  
That people thick the slant sunbeam,  
Is this gay gossiping of Youth  
That chattering strikes my idle ear,  
And flows with laughter that, in sooth,  
Has power to quick a heart long sear!

---

## AUTOGRAPHS

(A. B. W.)

O HEART of Youth! I envy you  
The faith that makes your dreams come  
true.

(R. E. S.)

I have no sermon grave to preach,  
No lesson deep of life to teach  
To you to-day.  
Only a wish that from above  
The gods may crown your heart with love  
Along Life's way.

(N. M. G.)

The gates of Life swing open wide,  
And Love and Youth with you abide,  
In Spring's sweet day.  
May never crabbed, envious Age  
Abate the fire of noble rage  
In you, I pray.

(H. B. B.)

For what is youth? A gust of breath  
Made hot with ardent Fame's desire;  
Ambition's spark of holy fire  
That glows not for decay or death.

---

(H. E. S.)

O for the holy vision,  
For Youthtime's high decision,  
    And uncorrupted ways;  
E'er yet the cold precision  
Of Age holds in derision  
    The zest of youthful days.

(R. T. H.)

Visions of what we shall be,—  
Captains that sail the wide sea,  
Dwellers in palaces we,—  
Leaders of Life, in sooth;  
    Ladies and lords in the land,  
    Counting our gold as the sand,  
    Walking with Love hand in hand,—  
This is the promise of Youth.









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